# From Bill to Law

Trace a proposal through Congress and the president

**8.C.4.4.B** "Trace the basic steps of the legislative process using contemporary examples."

NAME _____ DATE _____

## 1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline the steps in the bill's path to a presidential signature, then number those steps in order to show how the proposal becomes law.

### A Cooler Library

1. On a hot afternoon, a library opens its doors as a cooling center, but its air conditioner has failed. Imagine that in 2026 a member of the U.S. House proposes a federal grant program to help public libraries repair cooling equipment. The member writes a bill and introduces it in the House. A House committee studies the bill and hears from librarians and health experts. Members may change its wording before voting on whether to send it to the full House. A bill that stalls in committee may never reach a floor vote.

2. The full House debates the library bill and votes to pass it. Next, the Senate considers the bill, often through a Senate committee before a vote by the full Senate. Suppose the Senate passes a version that gives priority to libraries in places with frequent heat waves, while the House version does not. The two chambers must agree on identical wording. Lawmakers work out one final version, and both the House and Senate vote to approve that same text. Passing one chamber alone cannot send the bill to the president.

3. The approved library bill goes to the president. If the president signs it, it becomes law, and a federal agency can run the grant program. If the president vetoes it, Congress can still make it law by overriding the veto with a two-thirds vote in each chamber. If that override fails, the bill does not become law. Even after a signature, repairs are not instant. The agency must explain how libraries can apply for grants, and eligible libraries must apply. A bill's journey includes decisions by committees, both chambers, and the president.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Trace the library bill from its introduction to a vote by the full House. What happens between those steps?

2. The Senate passes a different version of the library bill. What must happen before the bill can go to the president?

3. Why does the library bill not go straight to the president after the House passes it?

4. If the president vetoes the approved library bill, trace the path it must take to become law.

## 3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a new federal bill to help public schools replace unsafe drinking-water pipes. In five or six sentences, trace how your bill could move from introduction to becoming law, including what must happen if the chambers pass different versions.

**ANSWER KEY**

# From Bill to Law

**GRADE 8 · 8.C.4.4.B**

## PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the steps in the bill's path to a presidential signature, then number those steps in order to show how the proposal becomes law. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

## PART 2 · ANSWERS

| # | QUESTION | ANSWER |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Trace the library bill from its introduction to a vote by the full House. What happens between those steps? | **A House committee studies the bill, hears from experts, may change its wording, and votes on whether to send it to the full House.** |
| 2 | The Senate passes a different version of the library bill. What must happen before the bill can go to the president? | **Lawmakers must agree on one final version, and both the House and Senate must vote to approve the identical text.** |
| 3 | Why does the library bill not go straight to the president after the House passes it? | **The Senate must also consider and pass the bill, and both chambers must approve the same text.** |
| 4 | If the president vetoes the approved library bill, trace the path it must take to become law. | **Congress must override the veto with a two-thirds vote in both the House and the Senate.** |

## PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A House member introduces a bill offering federal grants to replace unsafe drinking-water pipes in public schools. A House committee studies it and sends it to the full House, which votes to pass it. A Senate committee considers the bill, and the full Senate passes a version with different grant rules. Lawmakers agree on one version, and both chambers vote to pass the identical text. The president signs the bill, making it law.

Accept a Senate-first path in Part 3 if the student traces committee consideration, passage by both chambers, agreement on identical text, and the president's signature in a logical order.